

# THE AUTHOR:

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE TO INTEREST AND HELP ALL LITERARY WORKERS.

VOL. I.

BOSTON, AUGUST 15, 1889.

No. 8.

ENTERED AT THE BOSTON POST-OFFICE AS SECOND-CLASS MAIL MATTER.

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## PLOT-MAKING.

In these days, when much is written and read, one of the chief difficulties the average writer has to contend with lies in the avoidance of self-repetition. He may unconsciously infringe upon the thoughts and methods of others and be forgiven, if his own way of treating his subject is striking, dramatic, and truthful. There is always more or less of mental similitude where thousands of minds are all intellectually groping in the same general direction. Like begets like; yet the fact that there is nothing new under the sun does not render the perpetual rehash of the same eternal truths less attractive. Like fashion's ever-changing garb, the infinite variety with which thought and language enable us to clothe them colors them with an outward newness that can never weary, though the form beneath is ever much the same.

But for a writer continually to recopy himself, however adroitly, soon begets the idea that he has no originality, or has outwritten himself, and he soon falls into disfavor.

The wide demand for short stories of late renders plot-making more arduous, out of the very multiplicity of the published results on every hand. The small pay which all but a few leading periodicals offer also causes the writer who depends upon his pen to send forth his literary fledglings in such rapid succession that he soon has to ask himself: "What can I say that I have not already said, or that some one else has not said in just that way before?"

Even an abnormal inventive faculty soon wearies,—if entirely and exclusively depended upon,—under the stringency of this demand. Thought is ready to clothe itself with language, yet the plot, the skeleton whereon to drape it, is difficult to articulate without violating the rights of many previous skeletons that have too recently danced out their brief hour before the public. Therefore, to what methods shall the wearied brain turn to relieve itself of the constantly augmenting exactions which previous efforts growingly require?

The news and incident columns of the great secular newspapers are a fruitful source to fall back upon. The truth that seems stranger than fiction seldom lacks a brief and graphic demonstration there. One of these incidents will often suggest a climax to which a train of minor probabilities can be made to adhere, and soon we may have the skeleton of a story,—which without that hint would have been unthought of,—photographed upon the mind. How easy, then, to jot down the links, and preserve all against the time of need without further trouble.

Again, we read a striking story, or a description, or a tale of adventure. Without illegiti-

mately plagiarizing, an idea is sometimes suggested out of some situation therein presented that gives a clue to another train of incidents, from which we may evolve a plot,—not at all analogous,—which would have slipped by us unconsciously without the prompting thus harmlessly given and received.

The old tales and romances of past ages are a fruitful field wherein the ingenuity of the modern story-teller might,—within certain limits,—reap a fair reward. Bearing in mind that, in every age, the same old story is being retold under new conditions to new ears and understandings, one can find perennial inspiration in sources as old perhaps as the feelings and emotions aroused thereby,—that is, as old as the history of man himself.

These and kindred methods may seem to some like a kind of intellectual wire-walking, with a gulf of imitation yawning perilously beneath; but in maintaining a proper balance the instinct of the true artist is apparent. It is, then, no ghoulish robbery of the mighty dead, but rather the re-creating in newer colors of that which, but for our efforts, would never be resurrected. Shakespeare himself is the one great demonstrator that will forever justify their application upon the undeviating line I have tried to indicate.

After all, is not the writer who sits down and "thinks up out of his own head" every detail of a good story quite as apt, unconsciously, to infringe upon some long-forgotten author as he who appropriates the buried germ and builds upon it in his own way? However, to aid one's self in this way,—legitimately and successfully,—is not given to every would-be artificer. Edged tools are dangerous. But, if we have the natural tact and apprehension,—“the divine discernment,”—to master the art, its very delicacy becomes a protection and a stay.

*William Perry Brown.*

GLENVILLE, W. Va.

#### ON THE ABOLITION OF THE PLOT.

It was said of the romantic Muse in Germany,—of the Pegasus, or winged horse of Uhland,—that, like its colleague, the famous war-horse Bayard, it possessed all possible virtues and but one fault,—that it was dead. It is in this decisive way that

Mr. Howells and others deal with the plot in stories and dramas; they decline to argue the matter, but simply assert that the plot is dead. If any one doubts the assertion, they would, perhaps, still decline to argue the matter, and simply extend the assertion to any critic who differed from them, pointing out that he must be dead, also. It may be so, since there may, no doubt, be room for such a possibility. “Tyrawley and I,” said Walpole’s old statesman, “have been dead these two years; but we don’t let anybody know it.” In the matter of literary criticism, however, the fact is just the other way. The critics who cling to the plot are not aware of their own demise; but Mr. Howells has found it out. To find it out is justly to silence them; for, as Charles Lamb says in his poem exemplifying “the lapidary style,” which the late Mr. Mellish never could abide:—

“It matters very little what Mellish said,  
Because he is dead.”

But if we grant for a moment, as a matter of argument, that whatever yet speaks may be regarded, for controversial purposes, as being alive, it may be well enough pointed out, that, if plot is dead and only characters survive, then there is a curious divergence in this age between the course of literature and the course of science. If anything marks the science of the age, it is that plot is everything. Museums were formerly collections of detached specimens, only classified for convenience under a few half-arbitrary divisions. One may still see such collections surviving, for instance, in that melancholy hall through which people pass, as rapidly as possible, to reach the modern theatre known as the Boston Museum. But in all natural history museums of any pretensions, the individual specimen is subordinated to the whole. The great Agassiz collection at Harvard is expressly named “The Museum of Comparative Zoölogy.” In the Peabody Museum at Yale,—in which, as Charles Darwin told me, quoting Huxley, there is more to be learned than from all the museums of Europe,—you are not shown the skeleton of a horse, and left with that knowledge, but you are shown every step in the development of the horse from the time when, in pre-historic periods, he was no larger than a fox and had five toes. In science, plot is not only not ignored, but it is almost everything; only it is not called plot, it is called evolution.

And conversely, what is called evolution in science is called plot in fiction. Grant that character is first in importance, as it doubtless is, yet plot is the development of character. It is not enough to paint Arthur Dimmesdale, standing with his

hand on his heart and despair in his eyes; to paint the hand anatomically correct, the eyes deep in emotion; but we need to know what brought him there; what produced the strange combination, a Puritan saint with a conscience wrung into distortion. Lear is not Lear, Hamlet not Hamlet, without a glimpse at the conditions that have made them what they are. With the worst villains of the play, we need, as Margaret Fuller profoundly said, to "hear the excuses men make to themselves for their worthlessness." Now, these conditions, these excuses, constitute the plot.

It is easy enough to dismiss plot from the scene, if it means only a conundrum like that in "The Dead Secret," or a series of riddles like the French detective novels. In these the story is all, there is no character worth unravelling; and when we have once got at the secret, the book is thrown away. But where the plot is a profound study of the development of character, it can never be thrown away; and unless we have it, the character is not really studied. What we do at any given moment is largely the accumulated result of all previous action; and that action again comes largely from the action of those around us. "We are all members one of another." Just as we are all learning this in political economy, are we to drop it out of view in fiction? The thought or impulse that springs into my mind or heart this instant has been largely moulded by a hundred men and women, living or dead; if the novelist or the dramatist wishes to portray me, he must include them, also. Otherwise the picture is as hopelessly detached and isolated as the figure in this sketch a young artist has just brought me from the seaside,—a little boy standing at the centre of a solitary rock fishing in the ocean; the whole vast sea around him, but not a living thing near him,—not even a fish.

We all find ourselves, as we come into mature society—and take our part in life, surrounded by a net-work of event and incident, one-tenth public and nine-tenths private. If we have warm hearts and observant minds, we are pretty sure to be entangled in this net-work. By middle life, every person who has seen much of the world is acquainted with secrets that would convulse the little circle around him, if told; and might easily eclipse all the novels, if the very complication of the matter did not forbid utterance. As no painter, it is said, ever dared paint the sunset as bright as it often is, so the most thrilling novelist understates the mystery and entanglement in the actual world around him. If he is cautious, he may well say, as the Duke of Wellington is said to have remarked

when meditating his autobiography: "I should like to speak the truth; but if I do, I shall be torn in pieces." If our realists would say frankly: "We should like to draw plots such as we have actually known, but we dare not do it; let us, therefore, abolish the plot," their position would be far more intelligible. Miss Alcott's heroine, in writing her first stories, finds with surprise that all the things she has taken straight from real life are received with incredulity; and only those drawn wholly from her internal consciousness are believed at all. Life goes so much beyond fiction that those who are brought up mainly on fiction are more apt to encounter something in life which eclipses it than something which seems tame in comparison. And, on the other hand, when we put real events into the form of fiction, they seem overwrought and improbable.

Much of this applies, of course, to character as well as to plot. The seeming contradictions in the character of Hamlet, over which the critics have wrangled for a century or two, are not really so great or improbable as those to be found in many youths who pass for common-place; and that man's experience is limited who has not encountered, in his time, women of more "infinite variety" than Shakespeare's Cleopatra. Character in real life is a far more absorbing study than character in fiction; but when it comes to plot, fiction is nowhere in comparison. Toss a skein of thread into the sea, and within twenty-four hours the waves and the floating seaweed will have tangled it into a knot more perplexing than the utmost efforts of your hands can weave; and so the complex plots of life are wound by the currents of life itself, not by the romancers. If life thus provides them, they are a part of life, and must not be omitted when there is a pretense at its delineation. I once heard an eloquent preacher (W. H. Channing) express the opinion that we should spend a considerable part of eternity in unravelling the strange history of one another's lives. It might be easy, perhaps, to devise more profitable ways of spending eternity; but there is no doubt that the pursuit he proposes, if we undertook it, would occupy a good many ages of that period. It would be necessary, however, to stipulate that none of it should be given to us in the form of autobiography, since we have altogether too much of that offered to us in this life. To make our friends really interesting, we must be allowed to explore their secrets in spite of them, and, perhaps, against their direct opposition.

Of course, we all view this drama of life around us through a medium varying with our tempera-

ments. Heine says that he once went to see the thrilling tragedy of "*La Tour de Nesle*," in Paris, and sat behind a lady who wore a large hat of rose-red gauze. The hat obstructed his whole view of the stage; he saw the play only through it, and all the horror of the tragedy was transformed by the most cheerful roselight. Some of us are happy to have this rose-tinted veil in our temperaments; but the plot and the tragedy are there. "The innocent," says Goethe, speaking of life, "enjoy the story." They should be permitted to enjoy it, which they cannot do unless they have it. Grant that character is the important thing; but character will soon dwindle, and its delineation grow less and less interesting, if we detach it from life. We are all but coral-insects or sea-anemones forming a part of one great joint life, and we die and dry up if we are torn from the reef where we belong.—*Thomas Wentworth Higginson, in The Independent.*

### THE MODERN NOVEL.

The summer school at Deerfield held recently a formal discussion on "The Novel," and in the course of the proceedings this letter from Henry James was read:—

I am afraid I can do little more than thank you for your courteous invitation to be present at the sittings of your delightfully-sounding school of romance, which ought to inherit happiness and honor from such a name. I am so very far away from you that I am afraid I can't participate very intelligibly in your discussions, but can only give them the furtherance of a dimly discriminating sympathy. I am not sure that I apprehend very well your apparent premise, "the materialism of our present tendencies," and I suspect that this would require some clearing up before I should be able (if even then) to contribute any suggestive or helpful word. To tell the truth, I can't help thinking that we already talk too much about the novel, about and around it, in proportion to the quantity of it having any importance that we produce. What I should say to the nymphs and swains who propose to converse about it under the great trees at Deerfield is: "Oh, do something from your point of view; an ounce of example is worth a ton of generalizations; do something with the great art and the great form; do something with life. Any point of view is interesting that is a direct impression of life. You each have an impression colored by your individual conditions; make that into a picture, a picture framed by your own personal wisdom, your glimpse of the American world. The

field is vast for freedom, for study, for observation, for satire, for truth." I don't think I really do know what you mean by "materializing tendencies" any more than I should by "spiritualizing" or "etherealizing." There are no tendencies worth anything but to see the actual or the imaginative, which is just as visible, and to paint it. I have only two little words for the matter remotely approaching to rule or doctrine; one is life and the other freedom. Tell the ladies and gentlemen, the ingenious inquirers, to consider life directly and closely, and not to be put off with mean and puerile falsities, and to be conscientious about it. It is infinitely large, various, and comprehensive. Every sort of mind will find what it looks for in it, whereby the novel becomes truly multifarious and illustrative. That is what I mean by liberty; give it its head, and let it range. If it is in a bad way, and the English novel is, I think, nothing but absolute freedom can refresh it and restore its self-respect. Excuse these raw brevities, and please convey to your companions, my dear sir, the cordial good wishes of yours and theirs, HENRY JAMES.

### LITERATURE FOR WOMEN.

There is one noteworthy change in the spirit of our literature that I have not seen commented upon. This is the almost entire disappearance of the distinctively woman's novel. I refer to such books as "*The Wide, Wide World*" and "*The Lamplighter*," to the novels of Miss Sewell, Miss Yonge, Grace Aguilar, Miss Warner, Miss Pickering, and Mrs. Grey. The last two of these writers, who once were very popular, are now absolutely forgotten. The domestic, semi-pious character of these books, which to men seemed trivial and empty, were the intense delight of the feminine mind thirty or forty years ago. Nothing of this kind has come from the press within recent years. Women still constitute the majority of novel-readers, but this special catering to their domestic tastes has ceased. None of the great recent successes, for instance, are specially feminine in character. "*Ben Hur*" is a robust novel, which derives much of its success from the brilliant description of a chariot race. "*Robert Elsmere*," "*John Ward*," "*Dean Maitland*," the novels of Marion Crawford, of Hardy, of Black, appeal as much to the masculine mind as to the feminine. Haggard's novels are distinctively for men, and Howells' stories, although lacking in robustness a little, do not find better appreciation with one sex than with the other.



And then look at the remarkable change of base on the part of the magazine conductors. Forty years ago the leading magazine was *Godey's Lady's Book*. This periodical was filled with fashion pictures, and stories supposed to be adapted by virtue of their domestic imbecility to the taste of the women of the period. *The Ladies' National Magazine* was similar in character. *Graham's Magazine*, although supposed to be edited for masculine readers, differed but little from *Godey's* in the nature of its selections, but omitted fashion-plates. When *Harper's Monthly* came upon the field, it addressed itself to all classes of readers, but in its short stories it had an eye to the supposed taste of women readers, and it was thought necessary to further gratify this class by a fashion department at the end. To-day our magazines, if anything, make their selections more noticeably for men than for women. The *Century* has made War papers its principal feature. Russian travel takes a large place; and all other papers are addressed to cultivated tastes without regard to sex. The same is true of *Scribner's Magazine*, which makes articles on the railways, on electricity, and on other wholly practical subjects its main features. The short stories in these magazines are no doubt more generally read by women than by men, but they are not selected with this fact in view, but solely as to certain literary qualities that know no sex. In *Harper's* there still lingers, perhaps, a little of the old tradition in its short stories, in which a domestic flavor is preferred.

What is the cause of this change? Has feminine taste undergone a revolution, or have men taken a dominant place among readers? Is it a step toward the final abolition of sexual differences which we so often hear prophesied? I am unable to answer the questions that I ask, and must content myself, therefore, by pointing out an evolution which I think has not been heeded. — O. B. Bunce, in *The Critic*.

#### DISADVANTAGES OF WOMEN WRITERS.

When we contrast the advantages enjoyed by the average literary man in the pursuance of his mental work with the cares, and interruptions, and petty obstacles of every kind that surround the average woman who essays to put her thoughts on paper, the wonder is not that she does it so well, but that she can do it at all, while in his case we have a right to expect better work than we often get.

The minister hies him placidly to his study for the preparation of the Sunday's sermon. With the closing of the door he leaves behind him all domes-

tic annoyances, and shuts out the hundred and one different noises that resound through the ordinary household. Nothing short of an alarm of fire in his own house disturbs his serenity and sense of security. The bell on the street door may jingle and dingle a dozen times, but he feels no nervous tremor lest his quiet be invaded, for is it not "wife's" task to keep away all visitors and other disagreeable things that would interfere with the heavenly flights to which his mind is supposed to be directed? Below stairs, the baby may be having a fit, Tom and Dick engaged in a fisticuff, the dog yelping because Harry is pulling its tail, and Flossy's piping voice above the din asking a flood of childish questions; but, deep in the unravelment of a sentence in the original Hebrew, or hunting up an abstruse analogy, the absorbed student hears and knows nothing of it all. Have we not a right to expect a beautiful, well-considered discourse from a man thus favored? A pathway thus made easy and strewn with helps surely ought to enable its fortunate possessor to give to the world thoughts profound and scholarly.

Turn now to the wife, and witness the contrast. Perhaps she is required to prepare a paper for the next church missionary meeting. It must contain a world of information, pages of statistics, scores of reasons for this, and countless possible objections to that, and all to be condensed into a ten-minutes' reading. Who smooths the pathway for her? Who keeps the children quiet that she may think in peace? Who answers the bell and entertains inopportune visitors for her? One word suffices for a reply: *Nobody*.

She sits down in the noisy sitting-room, takes up her pencil and any scrap of paper that is handy, using her knee for a table, and, amid a jargon of sounds that would drive every idea from a masculine brain, begins her essay. A score of times during the construction of a sentence she is forced to stop to tie Flossy's apron, wipe Johnny's nose, to beg Dick to quit teasing the baby, to answer questions, to suggest a new play, to tell Kitty where to look for her doll, to change her seat because Tom wants her chair for a horse, etc., etc., *ad infinitum*, and *ad insanity-um*. Outside interruptions come in the shape of a lady caller, a neighbor's child to borrow the pattern of a baby's cloak, varied by raps at the back door from that chronic bore in pantaloons, the boy who wants to sell matches or a nickel's worth of sassafras.

Now, what constitutes the difference between these two, that all the advantages, the ease, the freedom from distractions, should all be on one

side? The difference lies simply in the fact that she is the mother of the family, while he is only the father!

The sermon and the missionary paper are both forthcoming at their appointed times, but what hearer gives a thought to the manner and place in which each has been prepared? It is not unlikely that her effort is the brighter of the two. Such things have happened. However that may be, it goes to prove that, if equally untrammelled, and when surrounded by conditions as favorable as those accorded to man, women would eclipse the masculine writers of the day. The cynic may say the world does not demand such sacrifices from woman,—that her duty to her household is paramount to her duty to the literary world. Has he forgotten that the greatest political novel of modern times,—the work that shaped the destiny of a people,—was not the work of a litterateur who in the seclusion of his study thought out and elaborated the great moral picture by which the conscience of the nation was aroused? Has he forgotten that the author's study was her kitchen, her writing-desk the table on which she washed dishes and moulded out the family baking, her foot swinging the rocker of the cradle to the movement of her facile pen? We hear of no domestic obstacles in the way of the head of that family in the prosecution of his literary labors. He probably had a quiet room, to which he retired while writing his lectures and sermons; and yet the world knows him only as the husband of the gifted woman whose book did more for the freedom of the black man than all the combined masculine pamphlets, sermons, and lectures ever given to the public.

Nearly one-half the literary matter appearing in our magazines and journals to-day is written by women,—many of them mothers of families, who have no hours they can absolutely call their own, no quiet spot to which they can go for study and thought, no room to which the children cannot have access, no assurance that, if they turn their backs a moment to replenish the fire or get Johnny a drink of water, they will not have to hunt for their paper or pencil, which have been tugged away in the meantime by mischievous little hands.

Some of the brightest, most sparkling things which appear in the newspapers, and which the masculine reader devours as greedily, and enjoys with as much gusto, as he does the editor's leaders, are written by women who mix their literary work with their cookery, jotting their ideas on empty paper bags that have brought eggs and sugar from the grocery, while the waiters are waiting for the

apple sauce to stew or the pudding to bake.

The unbiased mind will admit that the piquancy and readableness of her treatment of common topics, as well as the high moral themes that engage woman's pen, furnish a *raison d'être* for her continuance in even wider fields of literature; and it is no Utopian eye that sees her, in a favorable environment, in the future taking the lead in literary work. — *Virginia Sharpe Patterson, in Belford's Magazine for July.*

### HOW PLAYS ARE WRITTEN.

Plays are *not* written—they are *rewritten*.

In this lies the advantage of the creative, as distinct from the critical, literature of the stage. The dramatic author writes at leisure—and regrets in haste. The dramatic critic writes in haste, and regrets at leisure,—a leisure so lengthy that his repentance rarely appears.

Twenty years of association with professional workers have afforded me a fair opportunity of observing the processes that distinguish the earnest labor of the successful dramatist from the easy effort of the more confident and self-assertive amateur who fails.

It takes five years to write a good play. Ridiculous! I agree with you. A good play has often been *written* in five days. But mark this: Honest study of dramatic art; months of evolution and revolution of plot; constant subjective association with the characters of the play, during which each has lived, spoken, and acted with intense reality: all this must precede, and prepare the mind for the comparatively trivial work of the hand.

The longer the dramatist walks, eats, sleeps, and lives with his characters, the more readily they will spring from his pen and live in his work.

Think what a good play implies:—

Knowledge of human nature, experience of life and art in general, and the stage in particular.

Philosophic insight, mechanical instinct, poetic fancy, sensitive sympathies, passionate fervor, and vivid imagination, thoroughness in preparation, industry in elaboration, conscience in revision, courage in excision, and, dominating all this, that breadth of mind which breeds humility, and that depth of heart whose understanding love goes out in charity to all mankind.

How rarely we ever see a play!

It is generally supposed that the stage is devoted to the *production of plays*. How laughable!

Another general supposition gone astray. The stage presents about one hundred pieces to one play.

A piece is no more like a play than a manikin is like a man.

A play is a creation resulting from that succession of processes by which nature converts conception into organization, and, through the pangs of labor, accomplishes a birth; a piece is a *contrivance* concocted by the more or less clever conjunction of amusing, but, generally, irrelevant, parts.

Plays, like lives, are evolved; pieces, like toys, are manufactured.

A play is the natural growth of a rational theme into dramatic form—developing situations that are the consistent consequence of the contact of certain legitimate types of characters, with manifestly possible turns of circumstance; a piece is the artificial “putting together” of individuals and incidents, without reference to reason or probability.

The aim of a piece is to titillate and astonish the general ignorance of the mass; the purpose of a play is to illustrate human life in such a manner as to charm, touch, enlighten, and enlarge human hearts.

Pieces amuse idle brains; plays delight active ones.

Pieces divert the puerile mind; plays enrich the manly mind.

No play can possess the fundamental requisites of unity, coherence, and consistency unless it has some one distinct and *focal purpose*. This focal purpose, about which all the other elements of the play must adjust themselves, with due regard for their respective importance, may be either the presentation of some great event taken from life or literature, or the illustration of some typical personality, whose characteristics are of supreme importance, or the demonstration of some philosophic idea, the truth of which it is the aim of every action to expose.

Given a great event, the work of the dramatist is then to select such types of character, and such subordinate incident as may most firmly hold the attention of the audience, and most naturally lead up to the crowning situation, presenting the event that was the primal cause of his endeavor.

When a personality becomes the prompting impulse of a play, the author's chief concern is then to invent a story that will supply incidents consistent with his characters, and affording the best opportunity of developing and displaying the typical traits of the individuality that gives focal interest to his work.

A play the conception of which is due to an idea demands of its author a succession of inci-

dents, which are the natural consequence of the relations of its characters, and which, by their unfolding, emphasize, with cumulative force, the rationality and ethical value of the theme, which is the germinating motive of his creation.

The *play of incident* makes its chief demand upon the mind of the *mechanic*.

The *play of character* calls forth the faculty of the *philosopher*.

The *play of ideas* implies, in more or less degree, the sublimating imagination of the poet, and the illuminating intuition of a seer.

The *master playwright* combines the constructive faculty of the mechanic and the analytical mind of a philosopher with the æsthetic instinct of a poet and the ethical ardor of an apostle.

As Browning so nobly recommends, let us “see all, trust God, nor be afraid.”

Let us go, unbiassed and unabashed, from the sanctuary of the saint to the den of the sinner.

Let us seek, with equal mastery of self, prison, or palace, the house of religion, or the hall of folly. Let us enter, in the searching spirit of philosophy, every place, high or low, where wrong is unmasked or right revealed, testing all, despising nought, that we may acquire that knowledge of human nature essential to interpret *man* to men.

Let us plot and *replot*, write and *rewrite*, design, undo and redo, with tireless patience and dauntless will, that we may develop that command of the resources of our art essential to capture the heads of the few and the hearts of the many; for then, and not until such a study of man is combined with such a labor of mind, will there exist a worthy corps of American playwrights. — *Steele Mackaye, in the Milwaukee Sentinel.*

## THE ART OF SUGGESTION.

The art of expression has very annoying limitations, especially in literature, and there are currents of suggestion (bubbling along just underneath the surface of prose and verse) which afford a fine aroma peculiarly gratifying to the book-worm, but which are streams of despair to the sensitive writer. Doubtless, Poe was right when he asserted that no thought can be beyond the power of expression in words; for a thought does not exist before it takes speakable form. There is a sense of things, however, preceding the thought of things, and this unformed, nebulous forerunner of thought often fails to condense and take on substance and shape. We have no communicable method of associating ideals one with another, save that of spoken or

written language, while material forms may be exhibited side by side. Here arises the chief difficulty in expressing those abstract impressions which refuse to take on speakable form. For instance, love has a name, and the name instantly satisfies the ordinary desire for expression; but what word, what phrase will convey the crudest idea of what may float into my consciousness as I lie looking up into the night-sky of summer, or off over the rolling summer sea? I know, as well as the best, that clear thinking must go before clear writing; but is not inadequacy of language the greatest hindrance to clear thinking?

It is the supreme quality of genius that controls the singular force of suggestion, and by it sets flowing those undercurrents which water and enrich the gardens of poesy, and bubble forth in airy founts of most tantalizing and most charming influence. The lurking meanings that leap from between the words and hover about certain happy phrases in the works of the master bards find their way into our minds by some obscure and indirect line of approach. I have always felt this sort of suggestiveness to be the chief beauty and the main value of Emerson's verse. Keats possessed this power of indirect expression in a high degree. So old Chaucer has the knack of saturating his verses with the philter of genius which fills the crevices between the words with luminous, wavering shades of meaning, observable, but not expressible by the words themselves.

Poe was a master of the art we are considering. In his prose, as well as in his verse, he used it to perfection, carrying it to an extreme never reached by any one before or since his day. The "Raven" and "Ulalume," the "Fall of the House of Usher" and "Berenice," are brimming with unspeakable suggestions. The secret of the fact that Poe's poetry is overestimated by the young and far underestimated by the older critics may lie in this abnormal suggestiveness. An illusion, such as literary suggestiveness must always be, will fade out and disappear under prolonged scrutiny if it be too tenuous, — too artificial, — too far-fetched. Sincerity was not a prominent element of Poe's art, and by this he loses when compared with such poets as Keats and Emerson, who brought to their work the absolute earnestness and enthusiasm of zealots.

Realism, as we have it to-day in prose and verse, is wholly devoid of genuine suggestive force. Leaving out Tennyson and Swinburne, there is no poet writing in English at this time whose verse is comparable with Poe's, Keats', Emerson's, or

Shelley's in suggestiveness or in the fertility of its undermeaning. I purposely leave Browning out of the account, because I have not yet finished a study of his works begun some years ago; but if I were ready to speak, I should probably place him above even Tennyson at this one point. — *Maurice Thompson, in America.*

### CHARLES DICKENS AS AN EDITOR.

Mr. John Forster, in his "Life of Charles Dickens," devoted but little space to the consideration of my father's work as an editor of magazines, — "less," he owned, "than might perhaps have been wished"; but this view of the biographer's subject is certainly of far more interest and importance than many other aspects which he has discussed at length. Beyond my father's early and brief connection with *Bentley's Miscellany*, a very great part of the work of the twenty busy years from 1850 to 1870 was devoted, first to *Household Words*, and then to *All the Year Round*, and nothing better illustrated his indomitable energy, and the boundless capacity for taking pains which distinguished him, than the strenuous manner in which the editorial duties of those journals were discharged. Everything that could maintain the high standard which he had set up was done. Nothing was considered too small, no detail too petty, for his own personal attention. The utmost pains were given to the consideration of every manuscript that came into the office, no matter whether its owner bore a name honored in literature or was only a raw recruit in the great army of writers. An amount of time and labor was devoted to the polishing and finishing of other people's work in proof which would surprise many occupants of editorial chairs, and which, there is no doubt, very considerably astonished some of the contributors whose work required the greatest quantity of excision and "writing up." During my own experience as sub-editor of *All the Year Round*, during the last two years of my father's life, I hardly remember a week in which, after making up the number in London, he did not devote the two or three succeeding hours to going with the utmost care over the proof of each article selected; and even when, in his absences from town on reading tours, he had to be content to leave some of the proofs to me, his instructions, as to the manner in which they were to be dealt with, were so precise and definite that any work which was done upon them might still almost be said to be his own.

A description of one particular set of proofs which he gave in a letter to Mr. Foster may fairly



stand for the description of many others. "I have had a story," he wrote in 1856, "to hack and hew into some form for *Household Words* this morning, which has taken me four hours of close attention. And I am perfectly addled by its want of continuity after all, and the dreadful spectacle I have made of the proofs, — which look like an inky fishing-net." I became very familiar with those "inky fishing-nets" in later years; and it is possible that, when the fishing-net method was employed on work of my own, I hardly appreciated the assiduity and painstaking care of the editor so well as when some other contributor proved the *corpus vile*.

Apart from the fact that it was impossible for my father to be anything but thorough, or to engage in any work, — or, for the matter of that, in any play either, — to which he did not devote his whole heart and soul; and apart from the other fact that he took a very serious view of the responsibilities of an editor toward his public: all this extraordinary care was the effect of a policy and a principle which were, and always have been, kept steadily in view in connection with the two magazines. To enlist promising recruits; to help forward rising merit; to further the development of latent ability; and, above all, to give every possible assistance to young writers who showed steadfast perseverance, and any of his own capacity for taking pains in small things as well as in great: these objects were always foremost in my father's editorial mind. Nothing gave him keener pleasure than to find anything good from a new writer; nothing was of more interest to him than the progress of any one who was able to date an important success in the battle-field of literature from a first appearance under his banner. Thus, it was always a source of infinite satisfaction to him, — to take one example only, — that the first poems of Adelaide Procter appeared in *Household Words* when their real authorship was unknown to him; and the interest he took in the unknown "Miss Berwick" affords an excellent example of the care and thought he was in the habit of giving to casual contributors, of whom he knew nothing except through the manuscripts which they offered for his editorial judgment.

It is not to be denied that all this unwearying personal care and labor occasionally had their drawbacks for contributors and editor alike. If any mistake was ever made, it was sure to be on the side of kindness, and it is certain that subsequent disappointment was not infrequently the outcome of an encouragement which was sometimes

even too generous, of an appreciation which was sometimes expressed with even an excess of liberality. That a good deal of excellent work was devoted to material which was not worthy of it is also indisputable, and disappointment arose too often on the editorial side, also, from the non-fulfilment of possibly exaggerated expectations. Furthermore, writers being only human, after all, there were occasional displays of ingratitude and perversity which might well have disgusted an editor less resolute and less conscientious. But, on the whole, the system worked well, — very well, — as the great success of the magazines attests on the one hand, and as many writers of repute still living, who went through the "fishing-net" mill in their early days, would be, I am quite sure, very willing to admit, on the other. — *Charles Dickens, Jr., in The English Illustrated Magazine for August.*

#### A NEW POEM BY MR. BRYANT.

I think I have the privilege of offering here a poem by William Cullen Bryant which his American readers have never seen. It does not, at any rate, appear in any edition of his poems which I have looked over. He wrote it, or offered it, nearly sixty years ago to Mr. Alaric A. Watts, the poet, of London, who published it in his "Literary Souvenir Annual" for the year 1831. The poem must have been written by Mr. Bryant when (if not before) he was thirty-six years of age: —

#### SONG.

##### I.

Oh, no, it never crossed my heart  
To think of thee with love,  
For we are severed far apart  
As earth and the sky above;  
And though in many a midnight dream  
You've prompted fancy's brightest theme,  
I never thought that you could be  
More than that midnight dream to me.

##### II.

A something bright and beautiful,  
Which I must teach me to forget  
Ere I can turn to meet the dull  
Realities that linger yet;  
A something girt with summer flowers,  
And laughing eyes, and sunny hours;  
While I, too well I know, will be  
Not even a midnight dream to thee!

This does not sound like a fancy piece purely, though it may be. At the time it was written Mr. Bryant had already left Massachusetts to enter upon his larger career in New York. — *Joel Benton, in the New York Herald.*

# THE AUTHOR.

WM. H. HILLS, . . . EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

\* \* THE AUTHOR is published the fifteenth day of every month. It will be sent, post-paid, ONE YEAR for ONE DOLLAR. All subscriptions, whenever they may be received, must begin with the number for January 15, and be for one year.

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Address:—

THE AUTHOR,  
BOSTON, MASS.

(P. O. Box 1905.)

VOL. I.      AUGUST 15, 1889.      No. 8.

Contributions are invited from readers of THE AUTHOR.

If there is anything wrong about the printed address on the wrapper of your magazine, let the publisher know.

Send to the editor of THE AUTHOR items of information about writers and their work, for the "Literary News and Notes."

With a view to securing uniformity in the titles applied to writers of shorthand, and also to operators of writing machines, the Chicago Stenographers' Association has resolved to use, and to recommend for general use, the word "stenographer," as the best title for a writer of shorthand; also, as verbs, "to stenograph," "stenographing," "stenographed"; and the word "typewritist," as the best title for an operator of a writing machine; also, as verbs, "to type-

write," "typewriting," and "typewritten." Other stenographic associations have been asked to take similar action. The general adoption of these terms would prevent confusion, and the list is perhaps as good as any that has been suggested.

Although THE AUTHOR and THE WRITER are two distinct magazines, they are so closely connected that nothing printed in one is repeated in the other. The departments of "News and Notes," particularly, are consecutive, and in order to keep fully informed about literary happenings it is necessary to read both magazines.

A special arrangement has been made by which *Current Literature* (price, three dollars) and either THE WRITER or THE AUTHOR (price, of either magazine, one dollar) will be sent for one year to any new subscriber, for three dollars, in advance. For four dollars all three magazines will be sent for one year to new subscribers. Subscriptions must be addressed to the publisher of THE WRITER. Early advantage should be taken of this opportunity.

## LABOR-SAVING WORD SIGNS.

In the April number of THE WRITER J. H. Kob gives a few simple rules for abbreviating common words in order to facilitate ease in jotting down ideas before they are lost.

Every writer has probably felt the necessity of some such plan. In fact, there is nothing much more disagreeable than the consciousness that a valuable thought has left for parts unknown, because thought is so much fleetier than our slow, cumbrous method of unphonetic spelling. In this respect experience has taught me the great value of shorthand characters.

I do not suggest that one should bother himself with a complete study of phonography, with all its rules and exceptions to rules. For purposes of general abbreviations there is a better way than that. Nearly every work on shorthand has a series of word-signs, embracing nearly all the common words, which require but little study in order to memorize them. As time-savers they are invaluable. One merit

they possess over matter written entirely in shorthand is, that when they are "cold" they can be easily read on account of their connection with words written in longhand. A cheap little work,—"Graham's Synopsis of Phonography,"—gives a list of these word signs, of which there are, I think, about eight hundred in all.

Of course, they are not as easy to memorize as they would be if one had a general knowledge of the principles of shorthand; but whoever is anxious to fasten mental impressions on paper as fast as they occur will find this plan well worthy of trial.

Geo. H. Hadley.

HOPE VALLEY, R. I.

### QUERIES:

[Readers of THE AUTHOR are invited to answer questions asked in this department. Replies should be brief and to the point, and they should always mention the number of the question answered.]

**No. 35.**—I desire to acquaint myself with one or more foreign languages,—French, Spanish, or Italian,—without the assistance of a teacher. Learning to speak with the aid of books alone, I apprehend to be extremely difficult, if not altogether impossible; but I believe it is possible to obtain a knowledge of a language sufficient for purposes of reading and translation unaided by a teacher. Can any of your subscribers or readers, speaking from experience, advise me? How shall I go about it, and which of the three languages is easiest to learn in the manner indicated? What books are recommended? Is the "Meisterschaft System" all that its publishers claim for it?

H. L.

MILWAUKEE, Wis.

### QUERIES ANSWERED.

**No. 31.**—Perhaps "A. M. G." means "Quad's Odds," by M. Quad, of the *Detroit Free Press*. Information regarding the book can be obtained by addressing the publishers of that paper at Detroit, Mich.

A. E. W.

WICHITA, Kan.

**No. 32.**—Let me offer this: "Books are cold but sure friends."

E. W. B.

OLIT CRTV, Penn.

**No. 32.**—If "C. D. B." is a book-lender, the following, which I remember reading in a friend's book, will be appropriate. It is to be printed after the name of the owner, and number of book:—

If thou art borrowed by a friend,  
Right welcome shall he be—  
To read, to study, not to lend;  
But to return to me:  
Not that imparted knowledge doth  
Diminish learning's store;  
But books, I find, when often lent,  
Return to me no more.

A. E. W.

WICHITA, Kan.

**No. 34.**—Helpful books for a writer wishing to cultivate a vigorous style are "Lessons in English," by Abbott & Seeley, and "How to Write Clearly," by Edwin Abbott. Roberts Bros., of Boston, publish both.

A. M. T.

BOSTON, Mass.

### PERSONAL GOSSIP ABOUT WRITERS.

**Caird.**—John Alison, Mrs. Mona Caird's father, was a Scotchman of sturdy originality of mind, who, even as a lad, revolted against his strict religious training, and later threw off all dogma, becoming an uncompromising free-thinker. Mrs. Caird's parents met and were married in Australia, but it was in the town of Ryde, on the Isle of Wight, that she was born. The husband of the famous lady, like his father, Sir James Caird, is interested in agricultural matters. He is a member of the counsel of the Royal Agricultural Society, and is well fitted for the post by the practical experience he has gained farming his two thousand acres of land. Mr. Caird is a genial, level-headed Scotchman, given to the conduct of everyday affairs. Mrs. Caird's study is upstairs, and has a large French window opening to the south. The prevailing tone of the decorations is robin's egg blue. On two sides the walls are lined with low book-cases. By the broad south window stands a big plain writing table, and at the opposite end of the room is an antique cabinet used as a manuscript cupboard. A typewriter, a letter press, and other concomitants of authorship stand about on convenient tables and shelves. There are no bits of bric-à-brac to catch dust, indeed, no extraneous objects. The room gives an effect of light and freedom, in short, of an ideal workroom. It was here that Mrs. Caird and I sat and chatted, and at the end of my visit we started on a pilgrimage over the house. As we approached the parlor, my hostess laughingly warned me: "My new drawing-room is frightening every one; I am told there's not a vestige of the quiet and ladylike about it. It is bold,

riotous, uncompromising yellow! like a daffodil. The alarm it excites is very amusing." This room has given the title to a short story that Mrs. Caird has recently published, "The Yellow Drawing-room." I can only hope that the yellow drawing-room makes as charming a background for her story as it does for the writer herself, with her lithe figure and dark hair and eyes. — *Galignani*.

**Habberton.**—I met John Habberton, who will always be known as the author of "Helen's Babies," on Broadway yesterday. He was born in Brooklyn, and lived on the Heights until along in the seventies. "Helen's Babies" has reached a circulation of over 250,000 copies, has had eleven English editions, and has been translated into French, German, and Italian. When the book was first offered for publication one house rejected it because it was too small a book, another because it was too childish for adults to read, and still another because its moral tendency would be bad. It was published in Boston in 1876. Mr. Habberton learned to set type in the establishment of Messrs. Harper & Brothers, and subsequently entered the counting room. He enlisted as a private in 1862, rose to the position of first lieutenant, and served to the close of the war; was in the employment of Harper & Brothers from 1865 to 1872, and literary editor of the *Christian Union* from 1874 to 1877. Then he took a position on the editorial staff of the *New York Herald*, where he still is. Mr. Habberton is the author of a number of books and short stories, and also of a play called "Deacon Crankett," which was brought out at the Brooklyn Theatre, with Mr. Ben McGinley in the title rôle. — *Brooklyn Standard-Union*.

**Lathrop.**—Rose Hawthorne Lathrop is spending the summer at New London, and so is the other poetess, Edith Thomas. The latter is very delicate and fragile looking. She and her sister live very quietly, and appear to be enjoying their summer rest, for Edith Thomas is a very hard worker, despite all her fragile looks, being one of the staff employed in compiling the Century Company's big dictionaries and encyclopædias. Mrs. Lathrop is as vigorous a little woman as one would care to see, and, like her brother Julian, inherits a vigorous constitution from her illustrious father. She is short and plump, with gray eyes and a great shock of red-brown hair, and she and her husband spend their summer like two jolly children off on a picnic together, putting in most of their time out on the beach four miles away from their home, where they have a big bath-house of their own, to which they carry their books and papers, their

luncheon and bathing suits. There they spend the whole day, frolicking in the water, lying on the sand under a white umbrella, napping or reading, or else scribbling with a stylographic pen in the shadow of the bath-house, while a stray stone keeps the wind from flying away with their papers. — *New York World*.

**O'Reilly.**—John Boyle O'Reilly, the poet of the Plymouth celebration, was born at Dowth Castle, County Meath, Ireland, June 28, 1844. He is, therefore, forty-five years old, but he looks much younger. A positive passion for athletics has given him a model physique. He is of medium height, and realizes to perfection the phrase "a well-built man." He is straight and sturdy of limb, with a lithe, compact body. His finely-proportioned head sits solidly on a full and sinewy neck, that springs gracefully from shoulders and chest that have been broadened by twenty-five years of boxing, wrestling, fencing, riding, and canoeing. And yet the intellectual element is strongly predominant in his face. His large and luminous eyes give assurance of mental power, and the massive forehead confirms the assurance. He smiles as naturally as a school-boy, and it is a treat to hear him laugh. Mr. O'Reilly began life as a journalist on the *Drogheda Argus* while yet in his teens. At the age of eighteen he enlisted as a trooper in the Tenth Hussars, otherwise known as the "Prince of Wales' Own." While there he became an apostle of revolutionary doctrines, was arrested for high treason, and in June, 1866, was sentenced to twenty years' penal servitude. He was confined in various English prisons until October, 1867, when he, with several other political convicts, was transported to finish his sentence in the penal colonies of West Australia. After enduring prison life there for about a year, he made his escape in an open boat, was picked up at sea by the American whaling bark *Gazelle*, and finally reached Philadelphia in November, 1869. In July, 1870, he became editor of the *Boston Pilot*, of which he is at present editor and co-proprietor. His fame as a poet is now secure, and so is his reputation as a writer of pure prose. His published books include "Songs of the Southern Seas," published in 1873; "Songs, Legends, and Ballads," in 1878; "Moondyne," a novel, in 1879; "Statues in the Block and Other Poems," in 1881; "In Bohemia," in 1886; "The Ethics of Boxing and Manly Sport," "Stories and Sketches," in 1888. — "Athenian," in the *New York Press*.

**Spofford.**—In the *Atlantic Monthly* for February, 1859, there was a short story which aroused a great deal of interest and curiosity in the literary



world. It was a sparkling story of Paris life, and the title was "In a Cellar." The author, hitherto unknown to fame, although she had been a contributor to the weekly story papers of that day, was Harriet Prescott, a young woman of twenty-four, living in Newburyport, Mass. "In a Cellar" made the author's reputation, and from that day to this, her name has been a familiar one in the best periodicals, and her stories and poems have delighted multitudes of readers. She began to write under peculiar circumstances. Her father, Joseph N. Prescott, left his home in Calais, Maine, where the girl was born, and went to the Pacific Coast to seek his fortune with thousands of other "forty-niners." While there, he was seized with lingering paralysis, and became a confirmed invalid. He had been a lumber merchant and a lawyer in Maine, and both he and his wife, Sarah Bridges, came of excellent New England stock. The girl, Harriet, when fourteen, left her Calais home, and went to live with an aunt in Newburyport, for the sake of the educational advantages which the town offered. She entered the Putnam Free School, and won a prize which a few gentlemen had offered for an essay on Hamlet,—an essay that attracted the attention of Mr. Higginson, who thenceforward did much to help and encourage her in her literary career. She finished her education at Pinkerton Academy, in Derry, N. H., whither her mother, with her other children, had moved from Calais. When her father was brought home an invalid, instinct told this eldest daughter that she could make her pen useful. Thus she began to write tales, and to send them to the story papers. These early stories have never been acknowledged or collected. They gave the young author, however, valuable practice, and enabled her to form a style of remarkable flexibility and richness. In 1865, Miss Prescott was married to Richard S. Spofford, a lawyer of Newburyport, and in course of time they made their home on Deer Island, in the Merrimack River, on the highway between Newburyport and Amesbury. Mr. Spofford died a few months ago. Mrs. Spofford's books are "Sir Rohan's Ghost" (1859); "The Amber Gods, and Other Stories" (1863); "Azarian" (1864); "New England Legends" (1871); "The Thief in the Night" (1872); "Art Decoration Applied to Furniture" (1881); "Marquis of Carabas" (1882); poems (1882); "Hester Stanley at St. Mark's" (1883); "The Servant Girl Question" (1884); and "Ballads about Authors" (1888).—*Book Buyer*.

**Tolstoi.**—Count Tolstoi's wife is the daughter of a Moscow physician. It is said of her that she

directs, controls, manages everything at the households at Moscow and at Yasnaya Poliana. She assumes the whole responsibility of caring for the family, which numbers thirteen children, superintends their education, and teaches them English and music. Her business ability is also shown by the fact that she has sole charge of the sale, circulation, and distribution of her husband's books. Nor is she wanting in sympathy for the count's intellectual labors. She is both amanuensis, reviser, and translator. Tolstoi's writing is illegible to most readers, and his wife rewrites his manuscripts again and again until they suit his fastidious taste. In this way she copied "War and Peace" from end to end six times, and his last work, "Life," she rewrote sixteen times, besides translating it into French.—*Chicago Times*.

**Tupper.**—Martin Farquhar Tupper, the once famous author of "Proverbial Philosophy," is still alive. He lives in a handsome country house in England. He bears a striking resemblance to Longfellow in his old age. Miss Tupper tells how her father came to write his "Proverbial Philosophy," as follows: "It is quite romantic. Papa fell in love with his cousin Isabelle, and then he thought he would, when he married her, translate his notions in the manner of Solomon's Proverbs, and he did so in the articles, first on marriage, then love, friendship, and so on. But, of course, you know my father has written a great deal against Ritualism, and he is a strong supporter of the Constitution."—*New York Tribune*.

#### LITERARY NEWS AND NOTES.

Wilkie Collins is gradually recovering the use of his brain, and is getting the use of his limbs. His physician says, however, that "Blind Love," now in course of serial publication, is his last novel. He corrected the typewriter's manuscript of the closing chapters while sitting propped up in bed. There is a curious thing about the title of the story. Mr. Collins at first intended to call it "My Lord Harry," but in conversation with some friends he was reminded that "by the Lord Harry" is a common form of mild oath in England. He at once changed the title to "Blind Love." Reference in the newspapers to Wilkie Collins' daughter has given rise to some misapprehension. Mr. Collins, never married. The lady referred to is his adopted daughter, and she married the novelist's solicitor, Mr. Bartley. Both before and since her marriage this young lady has assisted Mr. Collins as amanuensis and secretary. Since his illness she has passed most of her time at his bedside.

J. F. Farmer, the compiler of "Americanisms—Old and New," is making a slang dictionary, which will form three volumes, handsomely printed on foolscap quarto, and will be issued, in a limited edition of 500 copies, to subscribers only.

A volume of short stories and one of dramatic essays will be issued by Brander Matthews next fall.

Dr. Nansen's account of his recent expedition across Greenland will be published by Longmans, Green, & Co. early in the spring, and among the current stories about it is one that he receives \$12,500 for the work.

Robert J. Burdette is to edit the humorous department in *Lippincott's Magazine*.

Emile Zola says: "Style is born, like the color of the eyes, and newspaper work, rapid, fanciful, exacting, makes the mind supple and the pen ready. The habit of scratching off articles on the corner of the table in hot haste neither spoils the style nor perverts the idea."

Mrs. Mary J. Holmes, the novelist, has returned from her eight-months' tour abroad, and is now at her Rockport (N. Y.) home.

The Christmas numbers of *Harper's* and *Scribner's* cost \$7,000 each, the average being \$100 for every full-page engraving.

Jefferson Davis, having become dissatisfied with his profits upon his book, "The Rise and Fall of the Southern Confederacy," has had a dispute with the publishers of the work, D. Appleton & Co., as to the amount due him. The firm has made a proposition to refer the question to arbitrators, and Mr. Davis has accepted the offer. The publishers say that the sale of the book is confined almost exclusively to the South.

The first published portrait of Harriet Prescott Spofford is printed in the August *Book Buyer*. The September number will contain a sketch and portrait of Laurence Hutton.

The August number of *Book News*, Philadelphia, has a portrait and sketch of Sarah Orne Jewett.

*Sun and Shade*, the novel picture periodical without letter-press begun in New York a year ago, now has a circulation of 4,000 copies monthly. Its publishers announce that they mean to make it hereafter an artistic periodical of the highest class, and that they will reproduce the leading pictures in the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the best works of American artists. The subscription price will be increased to four dollars a year, but the magazine to-day is well worth twice the money.

Little, Brown, & Co. have in preparation "A Book About Florida," by Margaret Deland, author of "John Ward." It is to be issued in a handsome octavo volume, illustrated with four colored plates, and fifty etchings, and vignettes from designs by Louis K. Harlow.

In *Macmillan's* for August there is an anonymous story,—"A Modern Novelist,"—which should be read by the young woman who longs to marry some young man of literary or artistic temperament. In the same magazine Mrs. Oliphant begins a new novel—"Kirsteen."

Harry Harland ("Sydney Luska"), the New York novelist, has gone to England with his wife, and will probably be gone a year. He contemplates a tramp through Wales.

Paul L. Ford has prepared and will soon issue limited editions of "American Bibliography," a check list of biographies, catalogues, reference lists, and lists of authorities of American books and subjects; also, "Franklin Bibliography," a list of books written by, or relating to, Benjamin Franklin. Mr. Ford is his own publisher, at No. 97 Clark street, Brooklyn.

George W. Childs' "Recollections," parts of which have appeared in *Lippincott's*, will soon be published by J. B. Lippincott Company.

Ginn & Company will publish about October 1 a "History of the Roman People," by Professor W. F. Allen.

Emily A. Thackray writes of "Camps and Tramps for Women" in the August *Outing*, which is an interesting out-door number.

A portrait of Mrs. Mary C. Hungerford, editor of the "Home Work" department in the *Home Maker*, forms the frontispiece in the August issue of that periodical.

Miss Jean Ingelow has written some recollections of her childhood, which she thinks of publishing in this country. She has also lately finished a novelette.

The English Society of Authors is doing an excellent deed in preparing for the benefit of its members an analysis of the cost of publishing books.

*Belford's Magazine* for August has a new blue cover, which makes it much more attractive.

It appears that George Francis Train is not Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney's brother, but the son of a cousin of Mrs. Whitney's father.

Mrs. Humphry Ward has again taken Barrow Farm, Bepherarow, near Godalming, where she developed and finally wrote a large part of "Robert Elsmere." Her new house on Greyswood Hill, near Halesmere, will command a view of about forty miles over the most beautiful part of Surrey.

A new illustrated magazine has been started in England, giving one hundred pages of complete tales, by such well-known authors as James Payn, G. R. Sims, Hawley Smart, James Greenwood, Sir Gilbert Campbell, Bart., George Manville Fenn, Philip May, and Howard Paul. Moreover, three months' free insurance is guaranteed to the purchaser of every copy, and all for the small sum of "one penny."

Thomas Brower Peacock's "Poems of the Plains and Songs of the Solitudes" have reached a third edition, and have been translated into German. Of the author, Eugene L. Didier writes: "To Thomas Brower Peacock, and not to the half-savage Walt Whitman, America must look for her representative poet."

In "The Pace that Kills," the new novel by Edgar Saltus, a servant wearing a green suit is said to be "green of livery"; a lake is "bulwarked by undulant hills"; a dog-cart is "fronted by a groom"; a man is "utterly ramescent"; "lancinating pangs" are of frequent occurrence; a "dance was in progress, affectioned by few"; a star was "circumflexed by the moon"; Roland is represented as "assenting remotely"; a girl's "mind was pleased by the thought he had descended from a larger sphere"; he had "married her uniquely"; and she "rememorated the offences of the past."

In the August number of *The Sunny Hour*, the New York paper edited by twelve-year-old Tello J. d'Apéry, are two poems written for the paper by the Queen of Roumania ("Carmen Sylva"), a poem by Ella Wheeler Wilcox, another by Mary Mapes Dodge, a prose article by Mrs. Frank Leslie, as well as other interesting matter from well-known writers.

The *St. Louis Republic* offered a prize for the best list of ten books for young people's reading. Three hundred and twenty lists were submitted, and the committee awarded to Miss Katherine R. Blair, of Bunker Hill, Ill., the prize for the following list: Miss Alcott's "Little Women," "Little Lord Fauntleroy," "David Copperfield," "Pilgrim's Progress," "Scottish Chiefs," Andersen's "Fairytale Tales," "Robinson Crusoe," Lamb's "Tales from Shakespeare," "Arabian Nights," and Kingsley's "Water Babies."

With the August number *The Forum* completes its seventh volume.

Anna Katharine Green has now completed two novels shortly to be published. Her husband, Mr. Charles Rohlf, has also written a novel.

Names selected from Cooper's works, Indian and local names, will be given to 180 state islands in Lake George.

The *Woman's Century*, edited by Mrs. D. G. Croly ("Jenny June"), will be published fortnightly, and the first number will appear in September.

The midsummer number of *The Theatre* is adorned with a number of artistic engravings, among others a portrait of Wilkie Collins.

A second edition, revised and enlarged, of King's "Classical and Foreign Annotations" will be published early in August by Thomas Whittaker, of New York. The first edition was exhausted three months after its appearance.

Maurice Thompson's only volume of poems, "Songs of Fair Weather," was printed from type, and is likely soon to become a rare book.

Ernest Jarrold, author of the "Mickey Finn" sketches, is preparing to publish his work in book form. Mark Twain will write the preface, and Mr. Dana will also give the book a commendatory send-off. Mr. Jarrold is about thirty years old, short, and ruddy-faced.

M. Hungerford ("The Duchess") writes to the Lippincotts: "I never saw or heard of the trashy story you sent me, called 'Valerie,' until I received it to-day. Surely it is a scandalous thing that people can be allowed to thus use another's name. I have written to the publishers at Chicago."

The third number of the *Magazine of Poetry*, published by Charles Wells Moulton, of Buffalo, N. Y., fully sustains the dignity of this new and original quarterly review. Its 124 handsome pages include sketches and portraits of Katharine Tynan, May Riley Smith, Samuel Waddington, John Vance Cheney, Edgar Fawcett, Jessie F. O'Donnell, George MacDonald, George Meredith, and other poets, besides sketches of Mary Mapes Dodge, Will Wallace Harney, Lizette Woodworth Reese, Horatio Nelson Powers, and others. Choice selections of verse by these writers are printed in connection with the biographical matter, and there are also single poems, prize quotations, current poems, and other attractive features. Mr. Moulton's magazine is both novel and interesting, and it deserves the success that it seems already to have attained.

The *Illustrated London News* (American edition) for August 10 has for a large supplement a portrait in tints of the Hon. William Ewart Gladstone.

Lord Tennyson has celebrated his eightieth birthday. He was born at Somerby, Lincolnshire, August 6, 1809. His health is now much improved.

Edward Everett Hale is to write the life of James Freeman Clarke.

Root & Tinker, of New York, issued Tuesday, July 30, the initial number of the *Daily Dry Goods Reporter*, the first and only daily trade newspaper in the world.

There are now eight different American editions of Haggard's "Cleopatra," and the author receives royalties on only one.

Rev. Horatio Bonar, the well-known Scotch hymn writer, died July 31, in Edinburgh, aged 71 years.

A magazine to advance the interests of Mormonism, and to represent the Young Ladies' Associations of Utah, will be started in Salt Lake City in October. The editor will be Susa Young Gates ("Homespun"), of Provo, who, by the way, had an interesting article, defending Mormonism, in the *New York Sun* for August 11.

The issue of the *Publishers' Weekly* for July 20 is the "educational number." It catalogues the current text-books of the day, and is in every way a valuable number to those interested.

A work of great usefulness is the "Directory of the American Book, Newspaper, and Stationery Trade," which has just been completed by C. N. Caspar, of Milwaukee. It is an octavo volume of 1,500 pages, and contains 40,000 addresses.

The *Pacific Review* is a new monthly periodical issued at Los Angeles, Calif. F. E. Holloway is the editor. The first number has an article, "Authors and Writers of Southern California," by Charles Frederick Holder.

The *Western Journalist* has appeared in Chicago, with Frank A. Burrelle as publisher. It is devoted to the interests of publishers, journalists, and authors, and will have sixteen pages monthly.

The historical treatise on Columbus for which a prize has been offered by a Spanish Commission must be delivered to the secretary of the Royal Academy of History, at Madrid, before January 1, 1892. Works written in Spanish, Portuguese, English, German, French, or Italian may enter the competition. The two prizes amount respectively to \$5,700 and \$2,895, each of the two successful authors receiving besides 500 copies of his work.

Harper & Brothers have in press a new volume of poems by Will Carleton, author of "Betsy and I Are Out," etc.

Miss Grace Ellery Channing, the granddaughter of William Ellery Channing, is known in California as a clever writer. She has done some poetical and dramatic work which has been much praised.

Dr. A. C. Doyle, the author of the historical novel "Micah Clarke," is an English physician and a nephew of Richard Doyle, better known as "Dickie" Doyle, of *Punch*, who illustrated works by Thackeray. Dr. Doyle is about thirty years old, and has written magazine stories for some time. He has some repute at home as a cricketer.

The prize offered by *America* (Chicago) for an essay on the "Evil Effects of Unrestricted Immigration" was won by Ricard Dailey Lang, of Baltimore, Md. The paper appears in *America* of August 1.

Roberts Brothers have recently received a letter from Jean Ingelow denying that she is ill and unable to work. On the contrary, she states that she has just completed a four-part story, written a poem for the Christmas number of *Longman's*, and is now preparing a volume of prose and verse to appear the beginning of the new year.

Henry F. Kennan, author of "Trajan," "The Aliens," and other novels, has lately purchased a farm near Mamaroneck, Westchester county, N. Y., and, it is said, expects to spend there the remainder of his days.

Richard E. Burton, whose poems in *Harper's* and the *Century* have attracted so much attention, is a young man on the editorial staff of the *Churchman*.

The authorship of "Thoth" and "A Dreamer of Dreams" was attributed by the *Lindsay* (Ont.) *Watchman* of July 25 to a seventeen-year old boy in Lindsay, named Leslie Pogue. Regarding this claim, the *Toronto Mail* says: "We learn on good authority that young Pogue is only fifteen years of age, and that up to the beginning of the present year he was a student at the Lindsay Collegiate Institute. If it be true that he is the author of 'Thoth,' he must have written the book when he was only thirteen years of age. We are informed by Messrs. Appleton & Co., moreover, that they have just received a letter from the Edinburgh publishers asking that all American press notices of the two books should be sent to them for the author, who is evidently, therefore, a resident of the United Kingdom."